

U.S. Pat. App. Ser. No. 10/616,152

PATENT
Attorney Docket 713-18-CON2**Remarks**

Claims 1-3 were examined and rejected. Applicant respectfully requests entry of the amendments and reconsideration of the application in view of the amendments and following remarks.

Priority

The Examiner requests that the priority data regarding application 10/061,086 be updated. Applicants have amended the priority data in the specification.

Information Disclosure Statement

The Examiner states that two references listed in the Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) filed 12/22/03 were not considered. Applicants submit herewith a Supplemental IDS correctly identifying the two references that were previously incorrectly identified. The Supplemental IDS is accompanied by the fee prescribed by 37 CFR 1.17(p).

Specification

The Examiner objected to the specification and requests that reference numerals 50-56 on pages 9 and 14 be replaced with 50, 52, 54 and 56 because there are no elements that relate to reference numerals 51, 53 and 55. Applicants have amended the specification to relate the reference numbers of the drawings to the elements as described in the original written specification.

The Examiner also objected to the specification because the paragraph beginning at page 14, line 9 possibly lacked clarity as to which Figures respectively show the elements 1001A-1001F and 3A-3F. This paragraph has been amended to clarify this point.

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The Examiner rejected claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite and incomplete. In particular, the Examiner states that claims 1-3 are indefinite for setting forth a "plurality of stem side female recesses" without having claimed how a "side" would be understood as "stem side." The Examiner also states claims 1-3 are incomplete since it is unclear how the buoyancy unit is in mating relationship with the rings of the stem and how the exterior surface female references accept fasteners to secure to the support members.

Applicants have canceled claims 1-3 and have added a new independent claim (claim 4) to more clearly and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention. New claims 5-7 have been added to define with greater particularity the novel features of the invention. Support for claims 4-7 can be found on pages 14-15 of the specification. It is believed that new claims 4-7 address the concerns the Examiner had with claims 1-3 and fully comply with the requirements of Section 112.

Claims 4-7 are directed to a composite buoyancy unit that can be radially inserted between the support members of a buoyancy can. These claims are not directed to a frame made up of such support members or a frame that supports the composite buoyancy unit or a buoyancy can comprised of the composite buoyancy units and support members or frame. Rather, these claims are directed exclusively to the composite buoyancy unit as defined.

Conclusion

This Amendment does not increase the number of independent claims, does not increase the total number of claims beyond the number already paid for, and does not present any

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multiple dependent claims. Accordingly, no fee based on the number or type of claims is currently due.

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that this application and all pending claims are in condition for allowance, and such is requested.

Should there remain any outstanding issues, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney to expedite their resolution.

Respectfully submitted,

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HOWARD J. KLEIN
Registration No. 28,727

Klein, O'Neill & Singh, LLP (Customer No.22145)
2 Park Plaza, Suite 510
Irvine CA 92614
Telephone: (949) 955-1920
Fax: (949) 955 1921
E-mail: hjklein@koslaw.com

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